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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE SITUATION IN ABKHAZIA REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

Addendum

1. The present addendum describes events in Abkhazia since my report of 1 July 1993 (S/26023). It is based on information received daily from the United Nations Representative in Tbilisi and the military member of his staff who has visited some of the areas of fighting.

2. The shelling of Sukhumi by Abkhaz forces was resumed during the night of 1 July and intensified at 0600 hours on 2 July when more than 100 rounds were fired. At 0800 hours Abkhaz forces shelled Gulripshi which lies between Sukhumi and Sukhumi airport. The shelling of Sukhumi has continued unabated since then.

3. Later on 2 July about 300 Abkhaz combatants landed from the sea near the village of Tamysh in the Ochamchira district. They are said to have moved north since then and to pose a threat to Sukhumi.

4. Abkhaz forces have also been active on the Gumista river front north of Sukhumi. During the morning of 5 July they made five successive attacks, with artillery and air support, against the Georgian lines near Shroma and Ahalsheni villages. One Georgian SU-25 aircraft was shot down, reportedly by a heat-seeking missile, and the Georgian side claims to have destroyed two Abkhaz helicopters. Shroma is said to have been destroyed by shelling and heavy fighting continues in the vicinity.

5. On 6 July the Georgian Head of State, Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze, declared martial law in Abkhazia, initially for a period of two months.

6. Also on 6 July I received a letter from Mr. Vladislav Ardzinba, leader of the Abkhaz authorities in Gudauta, alleging that the shelling on 2 July had been started by the Georgian forces.

7. Discussions are taking place in Moscow between senior Russian, Georgian and Abkhaz representatives to revive the short-lived cease-fire which was agreed on 14 May and came into effect on 20 May. Progress is said to be slow. The Abkhaz side is insisting on a complete resolution of the conflict, not just a cease-fire, and is calling for the withdrawal of all Georgian troops from Abkhazia. Georgian proposals for the complete demilitarization of Abkhazia are opposed by the Abkhaz side which wants to keep its forces in being.

8. Mr. Ardzinba, in a letter of 5 July addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, expressed his appreciation for the proposed deployment of United Nations military observers (UNMOs) to Abkhazia. However, he wrote, both sides should first commit themselves to a cease-fire, the withdrawal of all Georgian troops from "Georgian occupied territory" and all "volunteer groups" from Abkhazia, and the creation by both parties of the necessary conditions for the deployment and functioning of UNMOs.

9. Casualties appear to be heavy. Information from hospitals in the area of fighting on 7 July was that 77 Georgian soldiers had been killed and 481 wounded since 2 July; during the same period 6 civilians had been killed and 43 wounded. Two hundred fifty wounded Abkhazians were counted in one hospital in Gudauta by an independent observer.

OBSERVATIONS

10. Given this very serious deterioration in the military situation, I believe that it would not be wise to proceed with the actual deployment of 50 military observers, as proposed in my report (S/26023), until the cease-fire has been re-established and is being respected. In these circumstances the Security Council may wish to authorize me to take all the necessary steps to ensure that deployment can be done rapidly as soon as this condition is fulfilled.

11. I remain convinced that these developments underscore even more the importance of establishing as soon as practicable a viable peace process.